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Ongoing priorities and themes

Ongoing priorities and themes

Note by the Secretariat**

Summary

The present note is an overview of developments under the mandated areas of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues since its fourth session, as reflected in the contributions of the United Nations system and the activities of members of the Forum and its secretariat. Suggestions for consideration by the Forum are also included.

* E/C.19/2006/1.

** The present document was submitted late in order to ensure the inclusion of the most recent information.

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Introduction

1. Since the conclusion of the fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a variety of activities of relevance to indigenous peoples have been carried out by the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, Governments, indigenous peoples' organizations, other non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, members of the Forum and the secretariat of the Forum. In October 2005, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat had invited written contributions from stakeholders on the follow-up to the fourth session and the preparations for the fifth session of the Forum. Contributions were encouraged that encompassed: (a) a response to recommendations addressed exclusively to the particular organization, fund, programme or department or to Governments; (b) a response to recommendations addressed to one or more organizations, or to the United Nations system in general; (c) the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Forum's recommendations; (d) other significant information regarding recent policies, programmes, budgetary allocations or activities regarding indigenous issues within the organization, fund, programme or department; (d) information and suggestions regarding the special theme of the fifth session; (e) the name of and contact information for the focal point on indigenous issues in the organization, fund, programme or department; and (f) a list of conferences and other meetings under the organization's auspices regarding indigenous issues in 2006 and 2007.

2. As at 17 March 2006, written submissions had been received from 19 United Nations and other intergovernmental entities, non-governmental organizations and Governments, encompassing the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Governments of Argentina, Denmark, Mexico and Switzerland and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, namely, the Indian Law Resource Centre, Tebtebba Foundation, the Saami Council and VIVAT International. First reports were submitted by Argentina, Switzerland, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations Country Team in Ecuador.

3. Following the fourth session of the Forum, the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2005, in July, had considered the report of the Forum and endorsed the draft decisions submitted for action by the Forum. The 2005 World Summit, which was convened at United Nations Headquarters in September 2005, included significant references to indigenous peoples in the World Summit Outcome.[1]

[1] See General Assembly resolution 60/1, paras. 46, 56 (d) and (e) and 127.

4. The present note is a general overview of the contributions of the United Nations system and of the main activities of members of the Forum and its secretariat in promoting the implementation of the Forum's mandate. Cross-references are made as necessary. Throughout the text, recommendations appear in bold.

I. Developments under the mandated areas and special themes of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

A. Economic and social development, including the Millennium Development Goals

5. Most of the written contributions received were linked to economic and social development. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues at its 2005 session focused on United Nations system action at regional and country levels and was able to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities for strengthening such action. Discussions revealed, in particular, a great need for capacity-building on indigenous issues within the United Nations country teams and government organizations, as well as the need for information on the Forum and its recommendations (see E/C.19/2006/3). Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the Forum, and Eduardo Aguiar de Almeida, Forum member, participated in the session which was convened by UNICEF and hosted by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City in September 2005. **The Group, inter alia, recommended that United Nations country teams establish inter-agency thematic groups on indigenous issues at national level and use the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (A/60/270, sect. II) as a framework for common strategies and advocacy.**

6. The United Nations Country Team in Ecuador set a good example of coordination by establishing an Inter-Agency Working Group on Interculturalism, dealing largely with indigenous issues and producing the first-ever report by a Team to the Forum. The Team found this working method useful for including an intercultural perspective in the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) and making indigenous issues operational. It concluded that the international agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, offered a space for dealing with the intercultural perspective as a human rights issue, and that the Forum's recommendations constituted a guide for aligning the agendas of indigenous peoples, Governments and the international system. **The United Nations Country Team in Ecuador recommends that the Forum examine the experiences of coordination within the United Nations system at the national level in relation to indigenous peoples and that it formulate specific recommendations to strengthen this work.**

7. Following a recommendation of the Forum at its second session, a meeting was organized between three members of the Forum, namely, Yuri Boychenko, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and William Langeveldt, and some 40 representatives of international financial institutions. The meeting was held in November 2005 at the World Bank in Washington, D.C., and gave the Forum members the opportunity to explain the mandate of the Forum, and its main recommendations regarding

international financial institutions, and to invite those institutions to engage with the Forum and to build capacity of their staff on indigenous issues.

8. In November 2005, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, Mr. Langeveldt and Aqqaluk Lynge attended a workshop organized by IFAD on lessons learned from the Fund's work with indigenous communities.

Desk review of the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework

9. The secretariat of the Forum commissioned a desk review of common country assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in 10 countries in order to ascertain whether and how indigenous peoples had been included therein. It is recalled that the most recent revision of the Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidelines in 2004 included indigenous issues, following proposals of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. The main observations and recommendations stemming from these desk reviews were the following:

Observations

(a) In countries with some positive policies towards indigenous peoples, United Nations country teams had been able to include indigenous peoples, analyse their situations and identify their key development issues with relative ease. On the other hand, in the absence of such national policies, inclusion with similar vigour of indigenous peoples and their issues was not possible;

(b) The involvement of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights during the preparation of Common Country Assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks had proved to be effective in terms of inclusion of indigenous peoples and adoption of a human rights-based development approach;

(c) The issue of participation of indigenous peoples had not been highlighted, even in those Common Country Assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks that had been prepared after the issuance of the 2004 Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidelines. Participation of indigenous peoples should begin in the preparatory processes of Common Country Assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks;

(d) Non-availability of ethnically disaggregated data still remained one of the biggest impediments to inclusion of indigenous peoples in Common Country Assessments, United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and country programmes and this problem needed immediate attention;

(e) In the analysis of situations of indigenous peoples, an assessment of their capacities to participate in programme formulation and implementation as well as to claim their own rights was missing, probably because of time and information constraints. Nevertheless, the issue was of utmost importance and warranted priority and targeted action.

Recommendations

(a) **The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should continue its support to United Nations country teams in the form of fielding human rights advisers, and holding regional workshops for United Nations country teams, government officials and indigenous organizations. The Forum and the Office of the High Commissioner should collaborate in that regard;**

(b) **Given the significant lack of awareness and capacity on indigenous issues, the Forum and its secretariat should develop a practical toolkit, the primary users of which would be civil society, government and United Nations country teams as well as other donors at country level;**

(c) **The Forum should develop a basic set of indigenous peoples-specific targets and indicators to which programme designers at country level could refer in developing their own indigenous peoples-specific targets and indicators suitable for their respective countries;**

(d) **The Forum should promote increased referral and advisory services for United Nations country teams regarding indigenous issues;**

(e) **United Nations country teams should advocate and support programmes aimed at enhancing the availability of ethnically disaggregated accurate and reliable data;**

(f) **While assessing the situations of indigenous peoples, United Nations country teams should take into consideration their special social, political and historical contexts along with statistical data;**

(g) **United Nations country teams should support and/or undertake programmes aimed at capacity-building of indigenous peoples so as to enable them to participate in and contribute to programme formulation and take ownership of programme implementation;**

(h) **United Nations country teams should designate focal points on indigenous issues;**

(i) **United Nations country teams should form technical working groups on indigenous issues that would comprise indigenous peoples, other parts of civil society, government, bilateral and multilateral donors, and United Nations organizations;**

(j) **United Nations country teams should solicit more advice and support from the Forum and the Office of the High Commissioner.**

Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals: desk review of Millennium Development Goal country reports

10. In an effort to provide the Forum with a basic overview on whether and how indigenous issues are taken into account in the Millennium Development Goals processes, the Forum secretariat has continued to conduct desk reviews. Twenty Millennium Development Goal reports were reviewed in 2005. Some of the conclusions and recommendations from this review are highlighted below:

(a) Over 80 per cent of the Millennium Development Goal reports surveyed did not sufficiently include indigenous peoples;

(b) Most of the reports did not include indigenous peoples' organizations either in the collection of information for the report, or in the planning for future interventions designed to target marginalized groups for assistance;

(c) Although some countries in one degree or another mentioned indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in relation to either specific goals or targets, they did not mention any targeted interventions specifically addressed to them, nor any efforts towards their full and effective participation. In the context of the Millennium Development Goals, free, prior and informed consent should apply not only to land development initiatives, but to all development initiatives focused on improving the lives of indigenous peoples;

(d) Most of the reports did not refer to indigenous peoples directly, but used different terminology, including regional or rural disparities, to express disproportionate development, when in fact these regions and/or rural settings often corresponded to indigenous lands and territories;

(e) While some of the reports mentioned the ethnic diversity of the countries and presented indigenous peoples as marginalized and in need of targeted interventions, none of the reports disaggregated data regarding the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples. Therefore, the realities in respect of indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals were most likely obscured. More focus on data disaggregation is indispensable for the future success of the Millennium Development Goals within countries with indigenous and marginalized populations;

(f) In future reports, when indigenous peoples' organizations are mentioned as having been consulted in the production of the report, it would be useful for the authors to provide examples of good practices in that regard so as to underline the importance of this process;

(g) The effective participation of indigenous peoples in environmental programmes can contribute to conservation and development. In Namibia, the setting up of conservation areas to enable the indigenous peoples of those areas to become both conservationists and the leaders of ecotourism provides a good example of how the State can simultaneously protect the environment and foster the development of the indigenous peoples;

(h) **Both developed and developing countries should do more to include indigenous peoples within the framework of the implementation of Millennium Development Goal 8. As it is, none of the Millennium Development Goal reports reviewed referred to indigenous peoples in the context of meeting Goal 8;**

(i) **Governments with indigenous peoples should incorporate the issues and challenges specifically faced by indigenous peoples directly into the framework of the Millennium Development Goal report by: (i) including indigenous peoples within the context of the overall report; (ii) including indigenous peoples in the context of meeting each specific goal; (iii) including indigenous peoples in the planning of the overall report and each individual goal; and (iv) including indigenous peoples' effective participation in the**

planning process of future interventions, as well as in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects that will directly or indirectly affect them.

11. **The challenges encountered in the inclusion of indigenous issues in the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as well as in Millennium Development Goal country reports, require the special attention of the Forum.** The need for capacity-building within the United Nations system, including country teams, as well as the effective participation of government and indigenous organizations in these processes has been repeatedly underlined, including by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. **The Forum may wish to promote special measures so that programmatic instruments, especially Millennium Development Goal reports and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), as well as Common Country Assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, will include indigenous peoples. Important recommendations in that regard are included in the reports of the Support Group and the International Expert Group Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, Indigenous Participation and Good Governance** which was held in January 2006, pursuant to decisions taken by the Forum and the Economic and Social Council (see E/C.19/2006/7).[2]

B. Environment

12. Environment, one of the Forum's substantive mandated areas, includes a number of important related issues, such as conservation, traditional knowledge, access and benefit-sharing, forests, climate change and environmental sustainability, which also relate to Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals. The processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity,[3] Climate Change[4] and the United Nations Forum on Forests are among the most relevant in this field. Linking poverty and conservation is an area of growing concern and activity.

Participation of Forum members at relevant meetings

13. Mr. Langeveldt and Parshuram Tamang participated in the symposium "Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity", co-organized by UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations University (UNU), the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Forum secretariat in cooperation with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and held in Tokyo from 30 May to 2 June 2005. The symposium was attended by nearly 80 participants and consisted of 9 sessions. The Forum and Convention secretariats organized a session on "Protective Measures for Sacred Sites in the Context of the *Akwé: Kon* Guidelines" (see document UNEP/CBD/WG8J/4/INF/4).

14. The International Technical Workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge was held from 21 to 23 September 2005 in Panama City. It had been organized in

[2] Papers presented at the Expert Group Meeting are available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.
[4] Ibid., vol. 1771, No. 30822.

response to a recommendation of the Forum at its fourth session and hosted by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Workshop was attended by 12 indigenous experts and representatives of 8 United Nations entities. During the workshop, participants exchanged information and discussed extensively ways in which different United Nations entities working on traditional knowledge could better integrate a more collaborative, complementary and holistic approach to traditional knowledge in order to enhance the understanding of indigenous concerns and the means of addressing them (see E/C.19/2006/2).[5]

15. Mr. Tamang participated in the meetings of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing (January-February 2006, Granada, Spain). The main issues considered at these meetings included the need for collaboration and sharing of negotiations between the two Working Groups as well as the need to avoid a duplication of the efforts of relevant international organizations (WIPO, World Tourism Organization) on potential elements in the development of sui generis systems for protecting traditional knowledge. Indigenous participation in the main Convention on Biological Diversity processes related to article 8 (j) and access and benefit-sharing is a major priority.

16. In February 2006, Pavel Sulyandziga participated in the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in New York, pursuant to a recommendation of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

17. Mr. Aguiar de Almeida and Mr. Tamang attended the eighth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006.

Other relevant activities

18. UNESCO has reported on a number of issues relating to the environment (see E/C.19/2006/6/Add.9) including the UNESCO Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) initiative as well as two publications, *Reef and Rainforest: An Environmental Encyclopedia of Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands* by Edvard Hviding[6] and *Water and Indigenous Peoples*.[7]

19. Since the Forum's fourth session, the Forum secretariat has been involved in two environment-related meetings:

- Poverty and Conservation Learning Group meeting, held at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) — World Conservation Monitoring Group Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 12 and 13 December 2005. The meeting highlighted, inter alia, the fact that the majority of donor agencies did not see a significant link between biodiversity conservation and their mission of poverty eradication, and the belief of indigenous organizations that conservation could cause or exacerbate poverty in some cases, for example, cases where indigenous peoples had been evicted from their territories and lands to make way for conservation parks.

[5] Papers presented at the Workshop are available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.

[6] Knowledges of Nature 1 (Paris, UNESCO, 2005).

[7] Knowledges of Nature 2, R. Boelens, M. Chiba and D. Nakashima, eds. (Paris, UNESCO, 2006).

- Tsleil-Waututh International Gathering: Indigenous Perspectives on Access and Benefit-Sharing from the Use of Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge, Vancouver, Canada, 25 February-2 March 2006. The meeting provided an opportunity for elders and community members to become involved in issues discussed at the global level in relation to traditional knowledge and genetic resources.

20. **Indigenous peoples' participation is still a high priority in the area of environment, particularly within the United Nations system. Better coordination is required in respect of issues such as traditional knowledge, access and benefit-sharing, sui generis systems and linkages between conservation and poverty eradication.**

21. **Possible recommendations that the Forum might consider are:**

- **Support for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other environment-related bodies, in all levels of discussion, decision-making and implementation, and the recommendation that the necessary funding be provided to guarantee such participation as well as build the capacity of indigenous peoples.**
- **Support for the work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in regard to in-session workshops, including indigenous expert meetings that would facilitate the discussion of the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples. Particular themes that could be addressed include specific impacts on fragile and vulnerable ecosystems, the interconnection between climate change and poverty, and the impact of climate change on indigenous knowledge and traditional practices.**
- **Examination of the impact of conservation on indigenous harvesting practices.**
- **Examination of the issue of sui generis regimes as a means of protecting indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge.**
- **Examination of the linkages between conservation and poverty eradication.**
- **Possible membership in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests within the United Nations Forum on Forests.**

C. Education

22. The mandate and work of UNICEF and UNESCO are crucial in the global efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal 2, namely, universal primary education. Both organizations have been carrying out extensive work on education, including activities of relevance for indigenous peoples. The important roles of mother tongue and intercultural education as guiding principles in the promotion of indigenous children's primary education have been widely recognized and many initiatives at national level are in the process of implementation, in particular, for example, in Latin America. It is encouraging that UNESCO has been developing a

position paper and a database on intercultural education and that UNICEF has been strengthening efforts to promote indigenous girls' education in several Latin American countries.[8]

23. Mick Dodson participated in the Fifth World Indigenous Education Conference in November 2005 in Hamilton, New Zealand, and was a keynote speaker at the panel on "Education for All and MDG 2: universal achievement of primary education" organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Forum secretariat. On numerous occasions, the Forum had stressed that primary education for indigenous children should be sensitive to indigenous cultures, histories and values; it should be in children's mother tongue at least for early learning, and it should be bilingual and intercultural so as to prepare the future of children.

24. At the Workshop on Partnership Visions for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People co-organized by the Greenland Home Rule Government with the Forum and the Government of Denmark in Nuuk, Greenland, in February 2006, much discussion focused on partnership-building with indigenous peoples in the field of education. **It was recommended that the Programme of Action for the Decade and the rights-based approach should constitute the framework for partnership-building in this area**.[9]

D. Health

25. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz paid an official visit to WHO in Geneva on 25 November 2005 and met with the Director of the Office of the Director-General of WHO as well as a number of senior officials of different departments relevant to indigenous issues. Matters of mental health, suicide and substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, traditional medicine, Millennium Development Goals, diabetes, tobacco and policy were discussed.

26. Some of the challenges faced by WHO in addressing specific health issues of indigenous peoples were noted, encompassing the collection of data based on ethnicity, activities of regional offices in the field of traditional medicine, specific indigenous programmes on HIV/AIDS, diabetes and tobacco, and possible advantages and disadvantages of having an organizational policy on indigenous peoples.

27. On the same occasion, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz paid a courtesy visit to UNAIDS, during which she met with the Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS. As a result of this visit and in response to recommendation 136 of the Forum at its fourth session,[10] UNAIDS has sought to bring more visibility to the issue of indigenous peoples and HIV/AIDS as reflected in the presentation of its first report to the Forum in 2006. The report is in the form of an issues paper which broadly maps out a number of challenges in addressing HIV/AIDS in indigenous communities.

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[8] For the reports of Mexico, UNICEF and UNESCO, see E/C.19/2006/4/Add.3, E/C.19/2006/6/Add.11 and E/C.19/2006/6/Add.9, respectively.

[9] For the Nuuk Workshop report, see information received from the Government of Denmark and the Greenland Home Rule Government as contained in document E/C.19/2006/4/Add.2. Papers presented at the Workshop are available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 23* (E/2005/43), chap. I.

E. Culture

28. Mr. Langeveldt and Mr. Tamang attended the international symposium "Conserving cultural and biological diversity: the role of sacred natural sites and cultural landscapes", co-organized by UNESCO, UNU, IUCN, FAO, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Forum secretariat. References to indigenous peoples' sacred sites and their protection were made in the final declaration of the symposium (see document UNEP/CBD/WGRI/4/INF/4) of 21 December 2005.

29. In February 2006, UNESCO organized an international workshop on cultural resource mapping in Havana in the context of a regional meeting on "New Perspectives on Cultural Diversity: The Role of Communities". Otilia Lux de Coti represented the Forum. As the representative of Guatemala in the UNESCO Executive Board, Ms. Lux de Coti also participated in relevant meetings convened for the purpose of adopting the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

30. UNESCO, as lead organization in the field of culture, has continued its work on standard-setting and on operational programmes relating to cultural diversity and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. The information provided by UNESCO to the Forum at its fifth session includes an extensive account of the variety of activities undertaken by UNESCO in relation to indigenous peoples. With a view to developing a sustainable partnership with indigenous peoples in all areas of the work of UNESCO, the Forum **may consider recommending to UNESCO that it establish an institutional partnership with indigenous peoples so that they can fully participate in the monitoring mechanisms of UNESCO Conventions that are relevant to indigenous peoples, such as the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**.

F. Human rights

31. Members of the Forum have been actively involved in a series of activities on human rights. Mr. Langeveldt addressed the thirty-eighth session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The engagement with the Forum of the Commission and its Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities in Africa will certainly be beneficial for the Forum's half-day discussion on Africa at its fifth session.

32. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Wilton Littlechild participated in the Expert Seminar on "Constitutional Reforms, Legislation and Implementation of Laws regarding the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" organized by the University of Arizona College of Law in Tucson to support the annual thematic research work of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples.

33. Mr. Aguiar de Almeida attended a symposium in Belem, Brazil, on voluntarily isolated peoples of Amazonia and the Gran Chaco region of South America. An International Alliance for the Protection of Isolated Indigenous Peoples was

convened by organizations attending the symposium and the Belem Declaration on Isolated Indigenous Peoples was issued on 11 November 2005.

34. It is encouraging to note, based on the contribution of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Forum at its fifth session (E/C.19/2006/6/Add.8) that the human rights treaty bodies continued to pay increased attention to indigenous peoples in their concluding observations after the examination of the reports of States parties. Furthermore, the Committee on the Rights of the Child continued to work towards the drafting of a general comment on indigenous children, following the Committee's thematic discussion on this topic in 2003. Joint urgent appeals were sent by several special rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights on specific human rights situations of indigenous peoples worldwide. The Forum **may wish to consider starting a dialogue involving human rights treaty bodies and special procedures of the newly established Human Rights Council, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with a view to seeking support to build the capacity of indigenous peoples and their organizations to better utilize these mechanisms for the protection and promotion of their rights**.

35. In view of the establishment of the Human Rights Council in March 2006, the Forum Chairperson, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, addressed a letter on behalf of the Forum to the President of the General Assembly and the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, which stated:

> At this moment of institutional change, on behalf of the Permanent Forum I wish to convey, through Your Excellencies, to the members of the General Assembly and of the Commission on Human Rights the strong support of the Permanent Forum for an enhanced substantive focus on the human rights of indigenous peoples in the new Human Rights Council.

G. Awareness-raising and information

Awareness-raising events

36. At the 58th Annual Department of Public Information (DPI)/NGO Conference (New York, 7-9 September 2005), Ms. Tauli-Corpuz participated in a high-level panel on building partnerships and highlighted the establishment of the Forum as one of the best global expressions of partnership among indigenous peoples, Governments, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and the academic community.[11]

37. At the commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People (see General Assembly resolution 49/214) at United Nations Headquarters in August 2005, a panel discussion was organized entitled "The Cause of Indigenous Peoples is Ours" and the new film produced by the Forum, entitled *Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations*, was screened. A cultural event was also organized, messages for the Day were issued by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Coordinator of the Second

[11] *Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal: Final Report* is available from http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/annualrep05.pdf.

International Decade, and the Chairperson of the Forum and indigenous performers participated at the event.

38. During the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held from 16 to 18 November 2005 in Tunis, the Forum participated in an event on a feasibility study for the creation of a virtual permanent forum that would make the Forum's work more accessible to communities using information and communication technologies (ICT).

Bartolome de las Casas award

39. On 19 December 2005, it was announced that the fifteenth Bartolome de las Casas award[12] had been awarded by the Spanish Government to Ms. Lux de Coti. At the same time, the Forum received an honorific mention in recognition of its role as a multilateral body that guaranteed the presence and voices of indigenous peoples in the United Nations system.

Logo competition for indigenous children and youth

40. In order to promote further knowledge of the Forum and the United Nations among indigenous children and youth, the Forum at its second session had decided to organize an indigenous youth art competition for the design of a logo for the Forum.[13] The Forum received a total of 148 entries from around the world.

Material produced by the Forum

41. The Forum secretariat in cooperation with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat prepared the poster for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The painting for the poster was a contribution of Carlos Jacanamijoy, an Inga artist from Colombia.

42. The Forum secretariat, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, produced the indigenous youth brochure entitled "Speak Up" in English, Spanish, French and Russian. The brochure describes how indigenous youth can become involved in the work of the Forum and is available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html.

43. Annually, the Forum secretariat produces four issues of an internal newsletter addressed to Forum members as well as four issues of a public newsletter in English. After the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues 2005 session held in Panama City, the UNICEF country office in Venezuela offered its cooperation in producing informal translations into Spanish. The public newsletter now includes some news from field offices and is available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/newsletter.html.

44. The Forum secretariat produced a 30-minute film entitled *Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations*, in French, English and Spanish, for distribution to United Nations country offices and Governments for the purpose of promoting integration of indigenous issues in their work and providing general information on the Forum.

[12] Information is available from http://www.casamerica.es/programacion/premio.jsp.

[13] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 23* (E/2003/43), chap. I, sect. B, para. 18.

45. The Forum secretariat in cooperation with United Nations Radio/Spanish Radio Section produced five radio spots for a public service announcement on the Millennium Development Goals, using indigenous people's voices and music. It is available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/es/multimedia.html.

46. The new website of the Forum secretariat, launched in March 2006, is an important information and communication tool.

H. Promotion of integration and coordination

Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues

47. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, UNICEF chaired and hosted the annual session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues in 2005. The Fondo Indigena participated in the Support Group session for the first time and the Commonwealth Secretariat joined in February 2006, thus bringing the total number of Support Group members to 29. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida participated in the session as well.

48. Some important recommendations included: **(a) building capacity within United Nations country teams on indigenous issues; (b) appointing focal points on indigenous issues in order that an inter-agency group might be formed at the regional level; (c) establishing an inter-agency readers' group for the review of draft common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework documents; (d) requesting the United Nations Development Group to distribute the report of the Support Group to regional directors of United Nations organizations in other regions with a view to initiating similar processes; and (e) creating inter-agency thematic groups on indigenous issues within United Nations country teams to follow up once a year on the recommendations of the Forum**.

49. The Forum secretariat was also involved in coordinating the International Technical Workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge mentioned in paragraph 14 above.

United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

50. In order to promote the integration of indigenous issues in the United Nations Development Group, including at the operational country level, the Forum secretariat participates in selected Development Group meetings, namely, those of the UNDG Support Group, the UNDG Programme Group, the Working Group on Capacity Development, the Task Force on Civil Society, the Task Force on Gender, and the Task Force on Non-Resident Agencies. The Forum secretariat perceives the conceptual and coordination efforts undertaken through the Development Group to be significant for the integration of indigenous issues within the United Nations system, given the fact that most development bodies, funds and programmes as well as departments participate in the Development Group.

Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

51. The main achievement of the Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs since the fourth session

has been the design and adoption of the "Framework of Department of Economic and Social Affairs technical cooperation programmes in countries with indigenous peoples". This Framework is to be used as a technical capacity-building tool in the formulation and implementation of activities of Department of Economic and Social Affairs technical cooperation programmes. The Framework structure comprises four main sections: identifying indigenous peoples in diverse contexts; participation and free, prior and informed consent; collection and disaggregation of data; and indigenous women.

Strengthening of local governments with indigenous authorities

52. As a result of the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues, the Forum secretariat and the Division for Public Administration and Development Management are co-managing an interdivisional project on issues related to institutional capacity of local governments led by indigenous authorities. At the invitation of the Government of Ecuador, the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Division organized, in Quito, a consultative meeting with indigenous leaders attended by 20 indigenous leaders from local governments, indigenous authorities at the provincial level and representatives of indigenous organizations working at community, regional and national levels. The main goal of the project is the empowerment of communities in municipalities with indigenous authorities through institutional capacity-building.

I. Indigenous children and youth

Ibero-American Meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Adolescents

53. Indigenous leaders and 80 indigenous children and adolescents from 17 Latin American countries, Ms. Lux de Coti and Nina Pacari Vega, representatives of several United Nations organizations and representatives of the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) participated in the Ibero-American Meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Adolescents, held on 7 and 8 July 2005 in Madrid. Her Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain also participated in the meeting, which had been co-organized by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, with the assistance of the Spanish International Cooperation Agency and the UNICEF National Committee in Spain. Issues raised during the meeting included the need for a UNICEF policy on indigenous children and youth, the creation of national indigenous youth and children forums, the importance for indigenous youth and children of knowing and using international treaties and human rights procedures, development with identity as an indispensable approach to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, capacity-building and the inclusion of a gender perspective. Areas highlighted for priority attention included migration, armed conflict, lack of participation, health and education that are basically and culturally inappropriate, environmental degradation, unemployment, and unregistered births.

Youth Assembly

54. The Forum secretariat addressed the Youth Assembly on 4 August 2005 at United Nations Headquarters. About 200 young people attended the session, where

the audience also heard from an indigenous Quechua elder from Peru, who expressed his vision of how young people could go about seeking a better world for all.

Website section on youth

55. The Forum secretariat created a special website section on indigenous youth and children (www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/children.html).

Youth brochure

56. The Forum secretariat released a brochure on Indigenous Children, Youth and the Permanent Forum, which is available in English, Spanish, French and Russian.

Youth Unit

57. The Forum secretariat is closely working with the Youth Unit/Division on Social Policy and Development/Department of Economic and Social Affairs to support and promote indigenous youth participation at the Forum's sessions.

J. Indigenous women

Task Force on Indigenous Women: compilation of case studies

58. The Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality was established in 2004, is composed of 15 United Nations entities and chaired by the Forum secretariat. In 2005-2006, the Task Force collected good practices and lessons learned from the work of the United Nations system with indigenous women. The collection of case studies on the work of the United Nations with indigenous women contains 18 cases submitted by the Convention on Biological Diversity, FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM on their work with indigenous women in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Task Force intends to publish this collection once it is finalized and to disseminate it widely so that it may serve as a practical tool for future work of the United Nations system and other organizations engaging with indigenous peoples. The compilation is available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/IANGWE_indigenouswomen_mar3.pdf.

Commission on the Status of Women

59. During the fifteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the official panel for the commemoration of International Women's Day, on 8 March 2006, included Ms. Noeli Pocaterra, President of the Permanent Commission for Indigenous People in the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The Forum secretariat co-sponsored, jointly with MADRE and the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI), a side event on "Violence against Indigenous Women". The Forum secretariat also participated in a panel on opportunities and challenges for women in the Americas organized by UNIFEM/Latin American and Caribbean Countries (LAC) and the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations.

Gender and statistics

60. Merike Kokajev attended the Sixth International Meeting on Gender Statistics: From Beijing to the Millennium Development Goals, held from 27 to 29 September 2005, in Aguascalientes, Mexico. UNIFEM, Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics, and the National Women's Institute organized this event. Ms. Kokajev addressed relevant recommendations adopted by the Forum at its third and fourth sessions linking indigenous women and data collection and disaggregation.

Second Meeting of United Nations Agencies and Indigenous Women Representatives of Central America and Mexico

61. From 23 to 25 June 2005, Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari Vega participated in the Second Meeting of United Nations Agencies and Indigenous Women Representatives of Central America and Mexico, organized by the Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender of Mexico, UNIFEM Mexico, the International Indigenous Women's Forum and the Mexican National Commission for Indigenous Peoples. Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari Vega gave a presentation on the Forum's mandate and its recommendations on indigenous women.

Projects

62. In December 2005, the General Assembly approved a project under the Development Account the main objective of which is to strengthen the capacity of institutions at the national and community levels in selected Latin American countries to better engage indigenous women in decision-making processes by utilizing new information and communication technologies (see document A/60/6 (Sect. 34), annex, sect. W, for a fuller description). The project will be executed by the Forum secretariat in cooperation with various other United Nations organizations.

II. Additional activities undertaken by the Forum secretariat to follow up on recommendations of the Forum and to promote the Forum's mandate

World Summit on the Information Society

63. Following the recommendation of the Forum, the Forum secretariat, as a member of the World Summit on the Information Society International Indigenous Steering Committee (IISC), supported at the Tunis phase of the World Summit the parallel event entitled "Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society: Towards an International Indigenous Portal"[*]. Co-Chairs for this parallel event were Mr. Littlechild, Forum member, and Eliana Pongiluppi, Board member, Comunic Internacional. During the event, the International Telecommunication Union announced its commitment to appointing a focal point for indigenous peoples. Hassan Id Balkassm participated on a panel organized by Geography Wise Productions and

[*] The final report on the event is available from http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/wsis-themes/indigenous/IISC-report-final.pdf.

Dialogue Between Nations, where he highlighted the mandate and activities of the Forum.

Brisbane International Conference on Engaging Communities

64. Within the framework of the International Conference on Engaging Communities, held in Brisbane, Australia, from 14 to 17 August 2005, the Forum secretariat, on 15 August, organized a capacity-building workshop, in cooperation with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia, on engaging indigenous peoples in governance processes. The workshop was chaired by Mr. Dodson. Mr. Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, served as Rapporteur. A major output of the workshop, attended by over 160 indigenous and other participants, comprised guidelines for engagement with indigenous peoples, intended as a resource for national and local officials engaged in governance processes. The Forum secretariat has posted these guidelines on its website (www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html).

Ottawa meeting on Indicators

65. As a follow-up to recommendations of the Forum, the Forum secretariat is organizing a series of meetings for developing indigenous-specific indicators to capture indigenous peoples' perspectives of poverty and well-being. The first such meeting will be held in Ottawa on 22 and 23 March 2006 within the framework of the Aboriginal Policy Research Conference, in cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada. The conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the Forum at its fifth session.

66. This meeting, along with a series of other such meetings in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the contributions of the Inter-Agency Support Group in its report to the Forum at its fifth session, will provide recommendations for a core set of global and regional indicators, which may then be utilized by Governments, intergovernmental organizations and the United Nations system when designing and monitoring programmes that directly affect indigenous peoples.

International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

67. The Forum secretariat organized a special event at the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in March 2006, that brought together a panel of Forum members, namely, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida, indigenous experts and representatives of United Nations organizations. The panel emphasized the fact that agrarian reform and rural development must be sensitive to indigenous peoples' rights and that, although they had many interests in common with the rural poor, indigenous peoples also had very distinct interests which, at times, were and had been threatened by policies and programmes intended to eradicate rural poverty. Central to these were indigenous peoples' communal rights to land, territories and resources which were threatened by an increasing emphasis on individual rights to land and the commoditization of land.

Database of recommendations: monitoring the status of implementation

68. The Forum secretariat is undertaking a review and analysis of the status of implementation of the recommendations made by the Forum at its fourth session and

will be updating its database of recommendations, which will be posted on the website. The challenges associated with monitoring the status of implementation of Forum recommendations can be broadly categorized according to the following considerations:

(a) It is difficult to know the status of implementation of general and broad recommendations that are not specifically addressed to any one entity;

(b) It is difficult to monitor the status of implementation in respect of recommendations that are about process and not necessarily about a specific tangible output, since Governments, intergovernmental organizations or the United Nations system may also leave their response open-ended or may not address these recommendations. The fact that a large proportion of reports received simply report on activities and not on actual progress makes it difficult to assess progress;

(c) It is difficult to monitor the impact at the local and national levels of recommendations that are addressed and implemented at the global level, since this is entirely dependent on which States or United Nations country teams decide to report to the Forum on national activities;

(d) It is difficult to monitor the status of implementation of recommendations that have multiple parts, since not every reporting Government, intergovernmental organization or United Nations system organization will report on each part of a recommendation;

(e) From a monitoring and management perspective, it is difficult to prepare a precise status report on the types of recommendations mentioned in (a) to (d) above.

69. **Since monitoring the implementation of recommendations is perceived as a vital function, it would be beneficial if the Forum made fewer recommendations, made recommendations that were clearer about expected outcomes, with possible targets, and avoided recommendations with multiple parts. Another beneficial approach for furthering implementation and making monitoring easier would be to have an enhanced dissemination strategy for the recommendations at country level, in cooperation with the Inter-Agency Support Group.**

Meeting on migration and indigenous peoples convened by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

70. Pursuant to a recommendation of the Forum made in 2004, a Workshop on Indigenous Peoples and Migration is being organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Forum secretariat in April 2006 in Geneva. The outcome of this welcome development will be announced at the fifth session of the Forum and will feed into the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development to be held in New York on 14 and 15 September 2006.

Concept paper on a "Report on the state of the world's indigenous people"

71. Following Forum recommendations, the Forum secretariat prepared a concept note on a possible global report on indigenous peoples. This concept note was presented to the Forum for its consideration at its meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, in January 2006.

Preparation of the Handbook for members of the Forum and the Resource Guide for participants at the Forum's sessions

72. In order to facilitate orientation and provide a resource tool for members of the Forum, the Forum secretariat prepared a Handbook that outlines how the Forum works, as well as provides practical information relating to the Forum's sessions. A Resource Guide was also prepared for prospective indigenous and civil society participants who would be attending the annual sessions of the Forum. This Resource Guide will be available in French, English, Russian and Spanish and will be posted on the website and disseminated widely.

Capacity-building

73. The Forum secretariat has been promoting capacity-building to the extent allowed by its resources. The production of the material outlined above, the production of the film *Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations*, the collection of case studies, the preparation of a toolkit on indigenous issues and regular cooperation with non-governmental organizations for training activities are some of its efforts in this area. Although resources have not yet permitted the launch of its indigenous fellowship programme, the Forum secretariat was pleased to host, in January 2006, a programme for a group of Russian indigenous fellows, in cooperation with the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North. In May 2006, the Forum secretariat will cooperate with Deusto University in Spain in organizing a two-week training programme for a group of indigenous fellows including participation in the fifth session of the Forum.

III. Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

74. Following the proclamation by the General Assembly of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in its resolution 59/174 of 20 December 2004, the Assembly adopted the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in its resolution 60/142 of 16 December 2005. It is recalled that the goal of the Decade is the further strengthening of international cooperation for the solutions of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development. This goal is expected to be achieved by means of action-oriented programmes, specific projects, increased technical assistance and relevant standard-setting activities. As described in the Programme of Action (A/60/270, sect. II.A), the main objectives of the Decade are:

(a) Promoting non-discrimination and inclusion of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of international, regional and national processes regarding laws, policies, resources, programmes and projects;

(b) Promoting full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decisions that directly or indirectly affect their lifestyles, traditional lands and territories, their cultural integrity as indigenous peoples with collective rights or any other aspect of their lives, considering the principle of free, prior and informed consent;

(c) Redefining development policies that depart from a vision of equity and that are culturally appropriate, including respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples;

(d) Adopting targeted policies, programmes, projects and budgets for the development of indigenous peoples, including concrete benchmarks, and particular emphasis on indigenous women, children and youth;

(e) Developing strong monitoring mechanisms and enhancing accountability at the international, the regional and particularly the national level, regarding the implementation of legal, policy and operational frameworks for the protection of indigenous peoples and the improvement of their lives.

75. The theme for the Second Decade, as adopted by the General Assembly in paragraph 4 of its resolution 60/142, is "Partnership for action and dignity".

76. The Coordinator of the Second Decade and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs has invited Governments, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations and bodies, and indigenous and other non-governmental organizations to provide information regarding specific plans of action they may intend to adopt in connection with the Second Decade. The Coordinator has also placed the subject of the Second Decade in the agenda of the United Nations Development Group for discussion and action. In addition, all Divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have been invited to contribute to a specific Department of Economic and Social Affairs plan of action for the Second Decade and also to identify benchmarks of achievement by 2015.

77. The above-mentioned poster for the Decade (see para. 41) will be ready by the fifth session of the Forum. Following a recommendation of the Forum in 2005, a special launch of the Programme of Action will take place in the General Assembly Hall at the opening of the fifth session of the Forum.

IV. Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues

78. In its resolution 57/191 of 18 December 2002 on the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to establish a voluntary fund in support of the Forum. In resolution 59/174, the Assembly, in proclaiming the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, also decided that a fund should be established to support projects and programmes during the Second Decade. In this regard, the former Trust Fund in support of the Forum has been renamed the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues and its terms of reference have been expanded to enable acceptance of contributions for this purpose.

79. In 2005, the Trust Fund received contributions from Finland, Mexico and Norway, as well as earmarked support from IFAD, thus bringing the total amount of contributions received in 2005 to $277,024. In addition, to date, the Trust Fund has also received contributions earmarked for projects related to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People totalling $160,822 from Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia and Germany. The Secretariat is exploring the possibility of transferring any remaining funds from the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People to supplement funds for the Second Decade.

80. As part of the activities during the Second Decade, the Forum secretariat finalized funding guidelines for submitting project proposals. The Forum secretariat received more than 200 project proposals and set up a review mechanism in 2006 to assist the Bureau of the Forum, which will serve as the Advisory Group for reviewing project proposals. The Bureau will meet for two days, on 11 and 12 May 2006, to review proposals.

81. During 2005, Trust Fund financing encompassed: (a) partial expenses for the International Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Peoples (New York, 17-19 January 2005); (b) travel of Forum members to meetings of relevance to the Forum's mandate: out of a total of 25 such meetings, the Fund funded 15; (c) earmarked support by IFAD for the preparation of case studies of IFAD-financed projects in indigenous communities and a framework for advocacy on development and indigenous peoples; (d) support for a data disaggregation project in Nepal from an earmarked contribution of UNDP; (e) production of an awareness-raising film on indigenous peoples and the United Nations in French, English and Spanish and reproduction of copies of the film for distribution to United Nations country teams and Governments; and (f) an ongoing project with the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs for the preparation of a Russian version of a publication on the Forum.

82. Additional earmarked support from UNDP, received in 2005, will be utilized for the project "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples", the main objectives of which are: to campaign for the Millennium Development Goals among indigenous communities at national level; to use the Millennium Development Goals as an advocacy and training tool for indigenous communities; and to enhance participation of indigenous peoples in Millennium Development Goal processes. IFAD is expected to provide another grant in 2006 for the organization of three regional meetings aimed at supporting the identification, based on the perceptions of indigenous people, of indicators of poverty and well-being.

83. In January and March 2006, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People addressed letters to Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and private institutions calling for contributions to the Trust Fund.